



Memorandum

TO: Historic Landmarks Commission

FROM: Courtney Damkroger

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: July 29, 2002

APPROVED:

DATE:

RE: HISTORIC PRESERVATION PERMIT (HP02-013) AND SPECIAL USE PERMIT (SP02-033) FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF 270 SQUARE FOOT OFFICE SPACE ADDITION TO AN EXISTING OFFICE/RETAIL BUILDING ON A 0.05 GROSS ACRE SITE

BACKGROUND

The applicant is requesting an Historic Preservation Permit and Special Use permit to allow exterior modifications and to construct a 270 square foot addition to a City Landmark (HL92-71) located at 848 The Alameda. The site is zoned LI, Light Industrial and is designated General Commercial on the San Jose 2020 General Plan Land Use and Transportation Diagram.

On the Sunol Street elevation, the proposed modifications include a 270 square foot, one story addition to the existing building and the replacement of a door with a window to match existing windows on the building. The new addition is proposed to be created by enclosing the area at the rear of the building, currently occupied by an exterior staircase and balcony above. The existing balcony and rails are proposed to remain. As shown on the attached plans, the applicant is also proposing to add a trellis to the balcony that would attach to the building. The newly enclosed area would be setback from the façade of the original building to help differentiate the new addition from the historic building. A 6'-6" masonry screen wall to match the exterior wall of the Landmark building is proposed for screening and two wrought iron gates are proposed for access. This enclosed area will provide a new ADA compliant ramp that can be accessed from Sunol Street via the wrought iron gates. A new recessed window assembly is also proposed on the new wall. The applicant is also proposing to remove an existing door on the Sunol Street elevation and would like to replace it with a new window assembly to match other windows on the building.

On the front façade of the building (The Alameda elevation), the applicant proposes to remove the existing non-conforming ADA ramp and would replace the ramp with steps, a level landing and handrails. The existing door and windows in the recessed alcove would be replaced and, as proposed, the length of the entry alcove would be reduced. The existing roll up awning would also be removed.

ANALYSIS

Secretary of the Interior's Standards #2 and #9 apply to this project and are summarized below for your reference.

Standard #2: The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.

Standard #9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

On the Sunol Street elevation, the proposed exterior addition complies with Standard #9 in that the new construction is differentiated yet compatible with the historic building. The materials and the 6'-6" setback of the new addition help to meet this Standard. Staff recommends that the proposed trellis on the second story balcony not be affixed to the building so that it can easily be removed and does not damage the historic fabric of the building.

Neither the conversion of the door to a window on the Sunol elevation nor the reconfiguration of the entryway on The Alameda elevation appear to comply with the Secretary of the Interiors Standards. Staff has recommended that the applicant explore other alternatives to converting the door such as securing it from the interior if an entry is not desired at this location.

On The Alameda elevation, the applicant is proposing to remove the existing non-conforming ADA ramp and add steps, a level landing and handrails. The current ADA ramp at the front elevation was added recently and removal of the ramp would not impact the integrity of the building. The existing door and windows in the recessed alcove are proposed to be replaced and the applicant is also proposing to reduce the length of the entry alcove. Staff believes that the existing materials should be rehabilitated rather than replaced and that every effort should be made to maintain the entry depth as a character defining feature of the building. The existing roll up awning is also proposed to be removed. This material is not part of the historic fabric of the building, and staff believes that removing it will not impact the integrity of the building.

RECOMMENDATION

Planning Staff recommends that the Historic Landmarks Commission forward a recommendation to the Director of Planning that includes the following:

- Approval of the proposed new addition at the rear of the building,
- Denial of the conversion of the door on the Sunol Street elevation to a window with the suggestion that the door be secured from the interior,
- Denial of the redesign of the entryway with the exception of the upgrade to the access ramp and the suggestion that the entry depth and storefront materials be preserved, rehabilitated and replaced with like materials where necessary.

Courtney Damkroger
Historic Preservation Officer

